

INTERNATIONAL CITY MANAGERS' ASSOCIATION

1313 EAST 60TH STREET - CHICAGO 37, ILLINOIS

Report

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USE OF EMPLOYEE ATTITUDE SURVEYS

What is the importance to management of attitude surveys in maintaining and fostering high employee morale? How can cities measure employee attitudes? How can the survey be used to improve employee morale and the general well being of the organization?

City administrators are increasingly aware of the importance of good employee relations. The people in an organization and how they work together, how they are led and how they lead, are as important, if not more important, as mechanical efficiency and streamlined procedures.

Personnel administration, as part of the management job, has a positive function to perform in developing employees who feel that they "belong" to the organization and who, together with other employees, are striving to fulfill the purpose of the organization. Such a state of mind among a group of employees is commonly referred to as "high group morale." Group morale has been defined by one person as "the capacity of a group of people to pull together persistently and consistently in pursuit of a common purpose."

Group morale is the sum of many individual attitudes, all of which affect both individual and group performance. These attitudes may be identified as: (1) the confidence that individual members of the group have in the purpose of the group; (2) the confidence that they have in the leadership; (3) the confidence that the individual members have in each other; (4) the organizational efficiency of the group; (5) and the physical, mental, and emotional security of the individuals.

Studies, while not conclusively indicating that high employee morale is directly related to high productivity, have convinced industrial management of the importance of good employee relations as a part of the management job. An employee group with high morale is more likely to utilize the training, skills, and initiative of its members to further the success of the organization than a group with low morale. This is just as true of city government as it is of private industry.

Before management endeavors to improve employee morale by using one or several methods at its disposal--more pay, greater fringe benefits, additional training, improved supervision, and others--factors which tend to produce both high and low morale within the organization must be identified. Industry has solved this problem by measuring morale through employee attitude surveys, which utilize standardized questionnaires and whose success is dependent upon the complete anonymity of individuals so that there is no fear of reprisal.

Within the past two or three years several cities also have conducted employee attitude surveys to determine what their employees are thinking about their jobs, supervision, working conditions, and other aspects concerning their employment. This report is based largely on the experience of six local governments which

have used employee attitude surveys: San Diego County, Calif. (557,000), Iowa City, Ia. (27,212), University City, Mo. (39,892), Columbia, S.C. (86,914), Wichita Falls, Tex. (68,042), and Two Rivers, Wis. (10,243).

Industrial Experience with Attitude Surveys

The first significant research into employee attitudes started about 30 years ago at the Hawthorne Plant of the Western Electric Company in Chicago. The so-called Hawthorne studies continued over a 16-year period and cost about \$1,000,000. The study began when the company started to explore the effect of good lighting on certain work groups. When the lighting was increased step by step over a period of time, production increased correspondingly. To check their findings, light was reduced, but production continued to increase until the employees were working with light no brighter than moonlight. Psychologists and engineers from Harvard University, called in to study the phenomenon, found the test group employees had come to feel important because they received so much attention and were not being "bossed." The employees felt that the study was more concerned with their welfare than production, but production continued to increase. In other words, the Hawthorne studies revealed that an employee's efforts were influenced more by his attitudes than by his physical surroundings.

In recent years industry has extensively used attitude surveys to measure employee morale, as indicated by a recent survey by the Dartnell Corporation of Chicago. Of 98 companies replying, 45 had made surveys and 23 more were considering their use. A second survey, covering 55 companies conducting one or more surveys, revealed that number of employees in these companies varied greatly--11 of the companies having fewer than 500 employees and 17 having more than 3,000. Most of the companies indicated that they planned to use the technique frequently.

A number of management consulting firms and university industrial relations departments are trained to conduct or assist in conducting attitude surveys. Forty-five of the 55 companies surveyed by the Dartnell Corporation had some help from outside consultants, either in planning the survey and questionnaire or in analyzing or interpreting the results or both. The advantages of outside consultants are that they provide scientifically developed questionnaires, tabulate the results and compare them with national norms for industry or occupational groups, and present management with a complete unbiased report on employee attitudes as determined from an interpretation of survey results.

A research group of the Industrial Relations Center of the University of Chicago has developed an attitude questionnaire known as the "Employee Inventory". Used in survey projects by both the Center and the Science Research Associates, Inc. (57 W. Grand Avenue, Chicago 10), the questionnaire has been given to over 400,000 employees. Adaptations have been made so that the questionnaire can be used by governmental units, but thus far it has only been used by a few federal agencies.

Value to Management

City administrators who have used employee attitude surveys have found the device to be a valuable managerial aid which helps to improve organizational effectiveness and efficiency. Although the attitude survey principally is a working tool which management can use as a basis for changes in policies and programs, the technique in itself tends to be a morale builder. The four major benefits of the survey

to management are: (1) a diagnostic device to uncover problems and problem departments; (2) an expression of management's interest in employee welfare; (3) a useful communications technique; and (4) a means by which management can analyze and improve the quality of supervision.

Diagnostic Device. The attitude survey provides the administrator with a reliable source of information on what employees really think about a variety of questions, problems, policies, and practices. Actually, without a survey the administrator is really not sure what employees think because he must rely largely upon the observations and reports of his subordinates which may reflect personal bias, misinterpretation, or concealment by employees who are afraid to express their feelings freely.

Weak spots in the personnel or administrative program, poor or unpopular policies and procedures, and irksome supervisory practices all can be brought to light by the attitude survey. In addition to identifying areas of discontent by problem, the administrator also can identify discontent by particular departments. In this manner the survey uncovers both problems and problem departments and tells what is troubling employees and where the trouble is.

Expression of Interest in Employee Welfare. Employees welcome the opportunity to voice their views especially if they feel that their work situation will be improved. The mere opportunity to voice their opinions gives employee morale a boost, and when asked for opinions by management, personnel realize that the city administration is sincerely interested in their welfare. In most organizations there is no outlet for employees' gripes and criticisms, and the attitude survey provides an opportunity to let off pent-up feelings which is valuable in itself. Due to the anonymity of the survey, an employee's answers cannot be identified and, therefore, there is no fear of reprisal. In spite of this freedom, however, cities have found that with few exceptions replies and comments are sincere, constructive, and made in a serious vein. The act of participation, together with evidence of management's interest in the personnel within the organization, contribute to better employer-employee relationships.

Communications. The attitude survey is a useful communications technique. It provides a new way to strengthen the weakest communications link of most organizations--the upward flow of opinions, suggestions, problems, and reactions from the rank and file of employees. The survey involves everyone in the organization and for that reason is more inclusive than the suggestion system which often does not uncover factors contributing to low morale. It is also subject to much less censorship than other communications methods dependent upon the use of routine channels in the organization.

Improve Supervision. The attitude survey presents management with an unusual opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of line supervision and to develop a better understanding between management and supervisors. In planning the survey the administrator should carefully explain the purposes and procedures of the survey to supervisors, pointing out the findings will provide supervisors with information which will help them in their work, and that no supervisor's job will be placed in jeopardy as a result of the survey findings. The administrator often will enlist the aid of supervisors in setting up distribution schedules and have them collect the attitude questionnaires.

The survey results should be discussed and analyzed with supervisors to determine what supervisory practices and policies will help each supervisor to build or

maintain favorable relations with his employees. The survey aids the administrator and the personnel department to determine what additional training will improve the quality of supervision. Supervisors can obtain a better appreciation of their jobs and the needs, desires, and reactions of employees. Thus, the administrator and supervisor both are more cognizant of their common goals and responsibilities in improving organizational efficiency and effectiveness.

Requisites of an Effective Survey

To be effective, an employee attitude survey should meet three necessary requisites: (1) the purpose must be clearly explained and understood by all employees; (2) the results must be shared with employees; and (3) management must indicate a willingness to follow up reasonable suggestions and recommendations with appropriate action.

Purpose. Employees should understand that the attitude survey has a constructive purpose designed to make the organization a better place in which to work. It should be emphasized that no attempt is being made to single out any employee or employee group for punitive action. If this is not done, individual employees and perhaps entire departments will take a defensive attitude and prevent the obtaining of sincere answers needed to obtain valid results.

The purpose can best be explained by the chief administrator or personnel officer in a written memorandum distributed with the attitude questionnaire. In addition, the purpose should be explained and discussed at administrative and departmental staff meetings so that all levels of supervision are prepared to inform employees orally.

Results. All employees should share in the results of the survey. Several methods or a combination of methods can be used to publicize them--in an employees' news letter, orally by supervisors, posting on bulletin boards, or by other communications methods used in cities. (See MIS report No. 60, "Methods of Keeping City Employees Informed".)

The best method is to have the administrator write a memorandum to all city employees, with an attached mimeographed tabulation of the survey. The memo, however, should be much more than a mere transmittal of the mimeographed tabulation. The administrator should analyze, to some extent, the results and transmit his impressions concerning them to employees. This is tangible evidence of management's interest in employees' welfare. A good example of this technique is the memorandum written by Thomas F. Maxwell, city manager, Columbia, S.C., and included as an appendix to this report.

Follow Up. Management's opportunity to improve employee morale comes after the survey results are obtained. The administrator, the personnel department, and administrative personnel carefully analyze the results to gain a greater insight into the over-all organizational problems and the particular problems of various departments, divisions, and sections. All aspects of employee relations problems should be discussed in staff meetings. Departments, in which certain problems have been encountered and successfully handled, can suggest possible solutions to problems of other departments.

In addition, the administrator has the benefit of group thinking and recommendations on which to base possible changes in policies or practices. The survey

results and a thorough analysis by the administrator and administrative personnel generally result in recommendations or requests for some changes in city policies or procedures. Proposals may range from some general change in policy of a long-range nature--such as a revision of personnel rules and regulations--to improving employer-employee communications by issuing an employees' news letter.

Where one proposal might be easily accomplished, it is obvious that all cannot be. In any event, the administrator should consider each reasonable proposal on its merits and take appropriate action. If it appears that a worthwhile recommendation can be put into effect by the city, affirmative action should be taken. If a request for a certain action cannot be carried out, the administrator should inform employees of the reasons as to why it cannot be done. Otherwise, the survey will produce few, if any, of its potential benefits and future surveys may tend to be discredited by employees. This certainly does not mean that the city has to comply with all requests, but certainly all requests should be given adequate consideration.

Conducting the Attitude Survey

Conducting an attitude survey basically involves three steps: (1) constructing the questionnaire; (2) distributing and collecting questionnaires; and (3) analyzing data revealed by the questionnaire.

Constructing the Questionnaire. The attitude survey questionnaire can be built around "open-end" questions where the reply must be written out, or multiple choice and "yes or no" questions where a reply is checked from two or more possible replies. For example, two open-end questions might ask:

"Are your suggestions well received?
Have you turned in suggestions?"

As a multiple choice question the above two questions might be stated:

"Do you ever offer suggestions for improvement and, if so, do you feel your suggestions are given consideration?

- ☐ I would be afraid to offer a suggestion
- ☐ My suggestions are listened to just out of courtesy.
- ☐ My supervisor not only listens to suggestions but always gives them proper consideration."

The advantage of the open-end question is that it does not suggest any answer to the employee, but this is outweighed by several disadvantages. They require more space and time to answer; they are more difficult to evaluate and prohibit statistical tabulation; many employees do not express themselves well in writing; and employees may fear that their answers can be identified by handwriting peculiarities.

Multiple-choice and "yes or no" questions are much more widely used and preferred than open end questions. All of the disadvantages of open-end questions are advantages when applied to objective questions, and various shadings of meaning can also be achieved with multiple-choice questions. Its over-all simplicity in administration and statistical analysis make the objective type question particularly useful.

A few open-end questions, however, can be used effectively. Consultants who have made attitude surveys recommend them as a means to obtain employees' suggestions and criticisms and to amplify replies to multiple choice questions. But such questions must be used sparingly and must be kept simple.

Cities which have made attitude surveys disagree as to whether open-end questions should be used at all. The arguments against them are principally that the replies are too difficult to tabulate and that only employees' petty gripes are received. Other cities feel, however, that open-end questions, such as "What suggestions do you have for improving your working conditions?" provide an excellent source of information and constructive suggestions. In San Diego County, Calif., over 200 typewritten pages of written comments and suggestions were received from more than 1,600 employees in a survey of employee attitudes in certain departments.

Statistical tabulations of such questions, however, should not be made except perhaps under the most general headings. Open-end questions do not lend themselves to tabulations and, moreover, that is not the purpose of the question. Just giving disgruntled employees an opportunity to express their gripes, let off steam and release pent-up feelings has certain benefits in itself. An employee's gripe does not affect the tabulations and it can be discarded if it is petty and useless.

Simplicity should be the trademark of the questionnaire to avoid having employees feel that they are wading through a mass of useless material and to make it easier to analyze the results. Many techniques used by consulting firms in making surveys may be eliminated by cities. This will simplify the questionnaire and still permit the city to obtain the results desired.

Devices, such as checking the consistency of replies by rewording and repeating similar questions throughout the questionnaire and putting questions pertaining to major topics in unrelated order, are not essential. Instead, all questions concerned with a single subject--supervisory practices, working conditions, employee benefits--should appear consecutively under a general heading, permitting the employee to focus his thinking on unified subject matter and to answer questions significantly and rapidly.

Distribution and Collection. In distributing the attitude questionnaire, the administrator wants to be sure that all employees have the opportunity to be included in the survey and that they clearly understand its purpose. One of the best ways to do this is to have employees' immediate supervisors distribute the questionnaire. This is done in San Diego County, Calif.; University City, Mo.; Columbia, S.C.; and Wichita Falls, Tex. In Two Rivers, Wis., department heads distribute them at meetings of employees, and in Iowa City, Ia., questionnaires were mailed to employees' homes. Questionnaires can also be enclosed with pay checks or distributed by an employee committee which later could also assist in the collection and in analyzing replies.

A minimum of discussion among employees about the questionnaire before it is filled out and collected is desirable, although it is impossible to prevent completely. Discussion may lead to collaboration which affects the reliability of individual replies. One city reported that employees in a department appeared to have gotten together to answer the questions. A technique used in San Diego County, Calif., of having employees complete the questionnaire simultaneously on city time helps in reducing any discussion or collaboration. Employees there fill out the questionnaires after receiving them from supervisors and then return them before leaving work. The other cities, however, allow employees to take them home and reply at their own convenience.

Three methods generally are used to collect questionnaires: (1) return paid mail, (2) locked boxes, and (3) collected by supervisors. The collection method chosen has a relation to the ease with which replies from different departments can be identified and then analyzed by department. Collection by supervisors or in lock boxes are used quite often for this reason. If locked boxes are used, a label with the department's name can be used to identify it and put in a specific location where employees return questionnaires. If the mail method is used, employees must be requested to write in the name of their departments or the questionnaires must be coded in some manner. To insure anonymity, however, cities should not attempt to identify the returns from any department or division represented by a small number of employees. This is especially true in small cities. In San Diego County, Calif., no attempt is made to identify a group with less than ten employees.

Analyzing Results. Cities can analyze survey results by three ways: (1) an over-all organizational analysis; (2) departmental analyses; and (3) comparative analyses of surveys conducted over a period of time.

Industrial firms can also make another type of analysis by comparing their findings to national norms for industry as a whole and for different occupational groups. Such norms are based on the results of a great many surveys made with standardized questionnaires developed by consultants. Since only a few cities have made attitude surveys, there are no standards which can be used to make comparisons. Norms and standards of course are of no value unless they are derived from standardized questionnaires. Five cities, Iowa City, Ia., University City, Mo., Two Rivers, Wis., Columbia, S.C., and Wichita Falls, Tex., are known to have used the questionnaire shown in an appendix to this report. The questionnaire was developed in Wichita Falls by Bill N. Taylor, a city manager for more than 25 years.

The over-all organizational analysis provides the chief administrator with a broad index of general employee attitudes, which enables him to evaluate broadly the quality of supervision and working conditions within the organization and the effectiveness of programs, policies, and procedures. Although over-all findings are important, more significant information can be obtained from the departmental analyses which pinpoint specific problems in various departments.

Employees in a particular department may be found to have consistently lower scores than employees in other departments, and this is where the diagnostic process begins. The administrator and personnel department should discuss the results with the department head to determine the nature of the problem and possible solutions. The department head should continue the process with supervisors, make immediate improvements that do not require the approval of the chief administrator, and formulate proposals and recommendations for consideration by the personnel department and chief administrator.

Comparative analyses of survey results conducted over a period of time provide the administrator with a means of measuring any changes in employee attitudes. In this manner the administrator can ascertain if weaknesses previously revealed have been improved, and whether former good conditions are still rated by employees as favorable.

Use of the Survey in Cities

An attitude survey is worth no more than efforts to do something about what the survey reveals. Practices and policies that appear to be sound and well

received should be strengthened and further emphasized. Sources of dissatisfaction should be investigated thoroughly and corrected if possible. Cities which have conducted employee attitude surveys have found that they point out weaknesses in the organization and provide bases needed to correct those weaknesses. Some of the uses of the survey by cities are summarized below.

San Diego County, Calif. San Diego County conducted employee attitude surveys in 1949 and 1952. The same questionnaire, developed by students of San Diego State College, was used in both surveys in order to facilitate comparison of the results. The survey was administered by a survey committee composed of the county administrative officer and the heads of departments participating in the survey. Only employees in departments where the department head wished the survey to be made were included. Questionnaires were distributed to 2,209 employees and 1,691, or approximately 76 per cent, were returned. Later several departments made improvements in communication programs by instituting departmental newsletters and departmental staff conferences.

Iowa City, Ia. The city manager conducted a survey of all employees in 1954 to determine the general attitude of employees regarding various fringe benefits and other aspects of their jobs. The city had been receiving a large number of requests for additional holidays, vacation, and sick leave time. A copy of the results of the survey was sent to each employee and the results were reviewed in detail with supervisors. In addition, the city manager periodically discussed different problems raised in the survey in the city employees' newsletter. In order to improve the quality of supervision within the organization, the city conducted a ten-week training course for supervisors, covering general supervision problems, human relations, and other personnel matters. Future surveys are planned to measure improvements in employee morale.

University City, Mo. University City, Mo., has conducted two attitude surveys for all employees and one for supervisory personnel for use as a guide in supervisory development and improved personnel administration. The city manager administered the survey with the aid of a personnel assistant. The last survey for all employees made early in 1955 showed that there had been substantial improvements in employee attitudes since the first survey in 1953. For example, one question was: "Do you think the city does everything that is reasonably possible to make your working conditions clean, orderly, pleasant, and comfortable?" In 1955, 89 per cent of the employees answered "Yes" as compared with 70 per cent in 1953. One of the improvements made as a result of the first survey was the preparation of an employee manual in a popularized booklet form to give employees more information about civil service rules and regulations.

Columbia, S. C. The city manager conducted an attitude survey early in 1955 to determine employees' attitudes toward working conditions, opportunity for advancement, job security, supervision, and to locate causes of dissatisfaction among employees. The results were carefully analyzed and will be used as a basis for formal personnel rules. The city manager distributed the results to each employee along with a covering letter directed to both supervisory personnel and other employees. The memorandum carefully analyzed the results and contained suggestions from the manager for improving employee attitude. The memorandum is reproduced in an appendix to this report.

Wichita Falls, Tex. Attitude surveys for all employees and for supervisory personnel were conducted in Wichita Falls, Tex., in 1952 and 1953 by the personnel department in cooperation with department heads. Following completion of the survey

the results were discussed by the city manager, personnel department, and department and division heads in a series of conferences. Weaknesses in each particular department were discussed and supervisors attempted to make improvements. One of the principal benefits of the survey was felt to be that employees were able to get a lot of gripes off their chests. One of the supervisors stated: "A mere opportunity to express my feelings on a questionnaire salves my ego. I have already received my reward. It makes me feel good to get all this written down on paper."

Two Rivers, Wis. The smallest city to use an attitude survey, Two Rivers, Wis., (10,243) has been able to convert the survey findings into tangible results. The survey was undertaken by the city manager to find to find out what phases of supervision needed improvement and to attempt to uncover factors of job satisfaction. The survey results were the basis for establishing a special supervisory training program, a safety training program, and a survey and report to the city council on employee job satisfaction, including several recommendations designed to improve employee welfare. In the supervisory training program an instructor, provided by the state department of vocational and adult education, used survey findings pointing out supervision weaknesses to supplement his course on "human relations".

A report to the city council of Two Rivers was prepared as a survey on major phases of city employment as they affect productivity and job satisfaction. Various sections of the report, in addition to job satisfaction as measured by the employee attitude survey, included employee turnover, suggestion awards, and various factors affecting the pay plan including cost of living, merit increases, fringe benefits, comparable salaries in other public and private employment, health insurance, and others. Seven recommendations were made for consideration by the city council: (1) regular appropriations for safety, job, and human relations training; (2) an employee suggestion system with cash awards; (3) recognition for long-service employees by special awards and increased vacation allowance; (4) a study of longevity pay increases for consideration in the fall of 1956; (5) a contributory "catastrophe" group insurance plan to cover large scale medical and hospital bills; (6) an increase in the police clothing allowance from \$50 to \$60 per year and (7) an over-all increase of 3.5 per cent in salaries together with semi-annual review of cost-of-living factors so that salaries and wages can be modified quickly if large changes should occur.

Note: Grateful acknowledgment is made to the following persons who supplied much of the information for this report: John E. Dever, city manager, Two Rivers, Wis.; Elder Gunter, city manager, University City, Mo.; Thomas F. Maxwell, city manager, Columbia, S. C.; Peter F. Roan, city manager, Iowa City, Ia.; P. W. Stahl, counsellor, civil service and personnel department, San Diego County, Calif.; and Bill N. Taylor, former city manager of Wichita Falls, Tex., and former president of the International City Managers' Association.

Note: The following attitude questionnaire has been used in Iowa City, Ia.; University City, Mo.; Columbia, S.C.; Wichita Falls, Tex.; and Two Rivers, Wis. The percentages shown on the questionnaire are the results of a survey made in University City in January 1955.

EMPLOYEE ATTITUDE QUESTIONNAIRE

WORKING CONDITIONS:

QUESTION	ANSWER	JANUARY 1955
1. Would you say that working conditions in your department are	Unsatisfactory Average Very good	5.6% 45.0 49.4
2. Do you think the city does everything that is reasonably possible to make your working conditions clean, orderly, pleasant and comfortable?	Yes No No opinion	88.7% 11.2 10.1
3. Are the tools and/or equipment with which you work satisfactory?	Very satisfactory Fairly satisfactory Unsatisfactory	64.5% 35.0 0.5
4. When I am given a job to do, my instructions are such that	I have a great deal of trouble knowing just what is expected of me I am sometimes uncertain I always know exactly what is expected	0.5% 23.5 76.0
5. If you have a grievance, how do you feel that it will be handled?	Would be ignored Satisfactorily Don't know	5.1% 77.3 17.6
6. Does your supervisor think of you as a human being or only as a cog in a machine?	Cog in a machine Human being Don't know	8.6% 81.8 9.6
7. To what extent are you allowed to participate in decision making on matters relating to your work?	Not allowed to Sometimes Almost always	7.5% 43.4 49.1
8. So far as my duties and responsibilities	I don't have a clear idea of them Nobody ever told me what they were I understand them fully	7.1% 2.2 90.0

OPPORTUNITY & JOB SECURITY

QUESTION	ANSWER	JANUARY 1955
1. Do you believe that you have an opportunity for advancement with the city?	No opportunity Some opportunity Good opportunity	12.2% 46.5 41.3
2. If your supervisor fails to handle your problem to your satisfaction, do you feel free to go above him even until you reach the city manager?	Yes No Not sure	55.4% 24.4 20.2
3. How sure are you of being able to keep your job as long as you do satisfactory work?	Not very sure Reasonably sure Very sure	4.5% 57.0 38.5
4. Should seniority or ability be more important in keeping employees on the job when layoffs become necessary?	Seniority Ability No opinion	20.0% 69.7 10.3
5. Are you afraid of losing your job for some slight cause?	Yes No Don't know	6.3% 79.5 14.2
6. Do you think that your job with the city is as secure as it would be if you worked for some other organization?	Not as secure About the same No opinion or don't know	3.4% 89.4 7.2
7. When it comes to my ability and experience, I feel	I have more than my job takes My job requires some ability and experience that I don't have They fit my job fairly well	19.0% 10.0 71.0
8. When it comes to taking up problems with those above me in the organization	I always feel free to go to them I have tried it but always get the "brush-off" I don't feel like doing it very often	78.0% 5.2 16.8

SUPERVISION & MANAGEMENT:

1. So far as making suggestions to my immediate superiors	I never felt like making any I make them but I don't be- lieve they are really wanted Suggestions are encouraged and always considered	9.2% 17.2 73.6
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QUESTION	ANSWER	JANUARY 1955
2. When you do a good job and feel that you deserve a little praise, how often does your supervisor praise you?	Never does Once in a while Nearly always says something nice	9.6% 38.1 52.3
3. Do you feel free to express your opinion to your supervisor even though you might disagree with him?	I don't feel at all free to express an opinion I am not sure I am completely free to express myself about anything at any time	7.9% 24.8 67.3
4. How does your supervisor handle grievances and personal problems of employees?	He takes an interest in the problems of employees He handles such problems fairly well He usually ignores such things	59.2% 34.7 6.1
5. Is your immediate supervisor fair in his treatment of you and other employees?	Nearly always fair Is usually fair Seldom fair	51.7% 46.6 1.7
6. Which answer best describes the kind of supervision you are given in your work situation?	Not enough supervision Just about right Too closely supervised	5.2% 89.0 5.8
7. Do you ever offer suggestions for improvement, and, if so, do you feel your suggestions are given any consideration?	I would be afraid to offer a suggestion My suggestions are listened to just out of courtesy My supervisor not only listens to suggestions but always gives them proper consideration	7.2% 19.2 73.6
8. How do you feel about your supervisors?	Very well satisfied with them Supervision average to good Dissatisfied with them	66.3% 31.9 1.8
9. Do you think the supervisory group, as a whole, is interested in the welfare of the employees?	Little or no interest Mild (or some) interest Considerable or extreme interest	3.5% 36.5 60.0
10. In your opinion, how well managed is your department?	Fair Above average Very good or excellent	28.6% 28.1 43.3
11. When it comes to knowing how I am doing on my job	My superior always lets me know how I stand Sometimes I am told but only when something goes wrong No one ever talks with me about that	55.6% 26.3 18.1

QUESTION	ANSWER	JANUARY 1955
12. As far as favoritism in my department, there is	Too much of it shown Some, but it is not serious Very little	13.9% 30.2 52.2
13. Do you feel free to go to your supervisor for advice on any problems	Yes No Not sure	85.8% 6.3 7.9
14. In my daily relations with those above me in the organization	I get along fairly well I seem to have trouble getting along I get all the help and cooperation I could ask for	36.8% 0.6 62.6

M I S C E L L A N E O U S:

1. In your opinion, are the vacation and sick leave privileges fair and liberal?	Not liberal enough Just about right Very fair and liberal	20.8% 38.7 40.5
2. To what extent do you feel that you are a part of and "belong" to the organization?	I don't feel that I am a part of the organization Some time I feel that I am a part and then again I don't I definitely feel that I am a part of the organization	1.2% 19.3 79.5
3. What does your family think of your job with the city?	Don't like it Don't care one way or the other Feels that the city is a good place to work	3.5% 15.9 80.6
4. To what extent do you find your work with the city interesting?	Very dull Neither dull nor interesting Quite interesting	1.7% 13.6 84.7
5. If I could have the same job in some other firm at the same pay, I would rather	Stay with the city Take the other job Either one would be all the same to me	85.9% 1.7 12.4
6. What is the attitude of your fellow employees toward you?	Helpful Indifferent Antagonistic	93.0% 7.0 0.0
7. Do you feel that the attitude of our employees in general has improved in the past year?	It has improved some It has not improved Don't know or no answer	75.4% 1.2 23.4

QUESTION

ANSWER

JANUARY

1955

8. Do you feel that your contribution to the successful operation of the city is	Very important Fairly important Of little or no importance	63.7% 33.3 2.3
9. How do you feel about the personnel rules and regulations?	Well pleased with them About average in treatment of employees Dissatisfied with them	55.9% 41.8 2.3
10. I think this check list is	A waste of time A good idea - I would like another one All right but I don't see any good it will do	7.6% 66.5 25.9

DO NOT SIGN YOUR NAME

Note: The following memorandum was written by Thomas F. Maxwell, city manager, Columbia, S.C., to inform all employees of the results of the employee attitude survey made early in 1955.

REPORT TO EMPLOYEES ON RESULTS OF EMPLOYEE ATTITUDE SURVEY

City of Columbia, South Carolina

March 21, 1955

TO ALL EMPLOYEES:

Some time ago, most of you were kind enough to reply to a questionnaire which concerned our personnel program. Originally my purpose in this survey was to locate the areas in which our personnel program and supervision could be improved. I felt that this survey would be used primarily as a guide for supervisory personnel but the more I have studied the results of the survey, the more I am convinced that it will be helpful to all of our personnel in evaluating their relations with their fellow workers. Therefore, I am attaching a copy of the results of this survey so that you may compare your answers to those of your fellow workers. It appears that between five and ten percent of our employees are generally unhappy with their employment with the City. Since the balance of the employees find the working conditions and supervision at least fairly satisfactory, it appears that perhaps these unhappy employees' dissatisfaction arises at least partially from their own attitude rather than being the fault of the supervisors. Employee-supervisory relations are not a one-way street. Admittedly, the major responsibility for good relations between the employee and his supervisor lies with the supervisor. However, the employee also has a responsibility to make an effort to straighten out any unsatisfactory relations that exist between him and his supervisor. I suggest that a careful study of the answers to this survey in relation to our own reactions to the questions will be of inestimable benefit to all of us. Since we spend most of our waking hours in our employment, it is sheer stupidity to fail to try to make that employment as agreeable as possible.

The following comments are directed primarily to supervisory personnel.

1. Apparently, we are not doing as good a job as we should in issuing instructions since 33 percent of the employees either do not know exactly what is expected of them or are sometimes uncertain. Perhaps we should adopt a policy of asking if there are any questions after we have given employees instructions.
2. I am greatly disturbed that 20 percent of our employees do not have a clear idea of their duties and responsibilities or have never been told what they are. It is a common failure of all of us to assume that people should know what they are supposed to do but it is the responsibility of supervisors to make sure that their subordinates do know. Lack of careful indoctrination at the time of employment of new people is probably responsible for most of our weakness in this area.
3. Please note that the 11 percent of our employees feel that they have had a "brush-off" when it comes to taking up problems with their supervisor. Every supervisor should conduct himself so that any employee feels free to approach him with his problems.
4. Don't overlook the value of praise for a job well done. Apparently, we are not doing too bad on this score and, of course, there is always a possibility that some of the 17 percent of the employees who have never received any praise have not deserved it.
5. Certainly we should all conduct ourselves so that all employees feel free to express their opinion on any matter at any time.
6. Apparently, we have not sufficiently developed the technique of communicating to our employees our very real and sincere interest in their welfare.
7. We obviously need to pay more attention to letting our employees know how they are doing on their job.

The following comments are directed primarily to employees who are not in supervisory capacity.

1. If you are one of those who are sometimes uncertain as to the job you have been assigned, please question your supervisor to the extent that you will fully understand your duties.
2. If you are an employee who feels that you are not free to go above your supervisor, if he fails to handle problems satisfactorily, even until you reach the City Manager, please be assured that you are entirely free to do so. The chief responsibility of supervisors is to help you with your problem. As City Manager, that is one of my chief responsibilities. Any employee is welcome to discuss his problem with me personally providing he has first made a sincere attempt to obtain a solution from his immediate supervisor and those above him in the department.
3. If you are one of the few employees who seem unsure of being able to keep your job as long as you do satisfactory work or are afraid of losing your job for some slight cause, it is suggested that perhaps there is something faulty in your attitude since most of the employees correctly assume that they need have no fear of losing their jobs so long as they perform satisfactorily.

4. If you are one of the few employees that feel that your immediate supervisor is seldom fair in his treatment of you, it is suggested that you carefully analyze your reasons for this reaction since nine out of ten of your fellow employees do not share your views.
5. If you are one of the employees who does not feel that he receives enough supervision, please ask your supervisor for more guidance.
6. If you are one of the employees who is "afraid" to offer a suggestion you should immediately put aside such unjustified fear.
7. If you are one of the employees who is dissatisfied with your supervisor, it would behoove you to examine your own attitudes since you are in such a small minority.
8. If you are among the one out of 100 employees that finds your work very dull, I would suggest that you are doing yourself an injustice by continuing in such a job and you should seek a transfer to another type of work.
9. If you are one of the three out of one hundred employees who finds the attitude of your fellow employees antagonistic, I would suggest that perhaps there is a chip on your shoulder.

If each of us gives sincere study to the results of this questionnaire and conscientiously strives to overcome our own shortcomings which may have been demonstrated thereby, I am confident that the survey will have proved to be not a "waste of time".

Yours very truly,

Thomas F. Maxwell,
City Manager.

TFM:wmf

